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21 November 1983

NOTE FOR: DCI

FROM: John Stein

Bill:

Below some points I think you might selectively use with the Long Commission. Not intended to be the definitive work, I hope you will find most or all of them valid.

-- There is no way on earth that one can insure protection against all terrorist actions everywhere. Even if we were omniscient, the human factor enters in and people who become the object of terrorist activities simply do stupid things and set themselves up.

--As for official Americans, there is a great deal that can be done in terms of education of personnel of terrorist threats, training in personal security tactics and the better security of American official establishments abroad. There is in State Department a reluctance to turn embassies into fortresses. (Eagleburger spoke to this point on TV while standing at the bombed embassy site in Beirut. You will probably recall an EXCOM meeting when it was noted that had the recommendations of our Office of Security, which were fully supported by State's Security office, been implemented, the bombing of the Embassy in Beirut would probably not have happened. State's SY Office recommendations were overruled by the Ambassador and the Department. The Long Commission can do this Government a great favor if it can insist that the State Department must listen and act on the recommendations of its own. Security Office

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I would prefer to see a worldwide use, sponsored by "civilized" nations to chat up the subject in symposia, conferences, etc. The purpose would be to sensitize populations that it is unworthy of the civilized to support terrorism

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--State sponsored terrorism is another kettle of fish. In this case, the United States and other civilized nations should take steps either in the UN or in other fora to disclaim those terrorist nations' policy and ostracize them from the community of nations.

--the Intelligence Community can and does respond to initiatives against terrorism in a number of ways:

we can collect better intelligence. It will never be perfect coverage, but when obtained it is and should be disseminated rapidly to those threatened. There is a long string of incidents which we have prevented in this manner. (I have asked [redacted] to try to find the listing of incidents prevented.)

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b. We can do a better job of analyzing skimpy intelligence.

c. We can thwart terrorist acts with by surfacing them before they occur [REDACTED]

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d. We can deal with friendly security services. We do now and I am content that our relations on the subject of terrorism are effective and our dialogue with those services are productive.

e. For use by ourselves or with friendly security services, we are working on the development of better technical equipment which could improve our collection capabilities [REDACTED]

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f. There are some who advocate retaliation against terrorists. I do not think we should be opposed to this concept. However, I do not think the Agency should be involved in such an activity because it would be misconstrued should it become public. [REDACTED]

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g. There are those who advocate preemptive strikes against terrorists. I personally do not oppose this if we know precisely what we are going after and the innocent do not get killed. It is a very debatable subject; however, and I am sure there are many in this building who do oppose preemptive strikes against terrorists on the grounds that it is either assassination or murder or both. (Mr. North's draft carefully touches on this potential weapon.) I think there are other ways to skin the cat, and we can preempt terrorist activity by means that do not necessarily lead to death and destruction.

--In conclusion we need not hang our head in shame on performance against the terrorist target. We are collecting more and better intelligence all the time. The target, however, is terribly diffused and compartmented, and we have no hope of always being either first or right. It is a canard that we simply collect "barest intelligence" and are ignoring the "street intelligence." [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] who have spent many years working against the more low life characters in the terrorist world. Unlike narcotics collection, we make absolutely no distinction between strategic collection and tactical collection and, in fact, collect more tactical than we do strategic intelligence against the terrorist target.

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